



Protecting Children in Indiana

Each year, more than 20,000 Indiana children are abused or neglected. That's 1,700 per month and 56 children per day — about three classrooms of children.

Indiana law requires anyone who suspects child abuse or neglect to report it to authorities. To report child abuse or neglect, call our toll-free, 24-hour, statewide hotline at 1-800-800-5556.

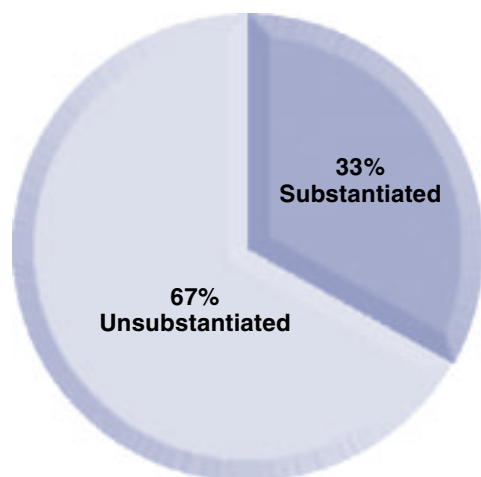
Abuse & Neglect: SFY 2003 Statistics

51 children died from abuse & neglect

61,492 children reported as victims

20,368 cases substantiated

Substantiated and Unsubstantiated Cases



61,492 Children were reported as victims

Changes to Indiana's child protection system

Immediate Changes:

- Hire 60 additional caseworkers, bringing the total of new caseworkers to 100 for a statewide workforce of 860. These workers will be hired, trained and ready for immediate assignment to fill any vacancy in the state;
- Add two trainers for new caseworkers so training can start immediately upon hiring;

- Hire seven caseworker mentors for ongoing/ special training around the state; and
- Purchase 600 cell phones so every caseworker has one.

Policy and Operational Changes:

- New Caseworker Training - Prior to being given a caseload, all new caseworkers hired will complete pre-service training institute (about six weeks). All caseworkers will be trained and ready to make literally life or death decisions before they are sent in the field. All workers will be required to have additional training during their first year on the job. Experienced workers will also be required to participate in skill training.

"Unfortunately, too many Hoosier children find themselves in traumatic, unhealthy and unsafe circumstances in which their lives are put at risk," Kernan said. We continue to take important steps to strengthen our ability to help these children and their families. It's one of our most important responsibilities and something we take very seriously."

—Governor Joseph E. Kernan
September 28, 2004

- Cultural Sensitivity Training - FSSA now mandates 36 hours of cultural sensitivity training for all case managers and supervisory staff and continues to develop culturally sensitive screening tools, refine assessment practices and revise training on an ongoing basis. One of the goals is to reduce the overrepresentation of children of color in the system.
- Family-Based Plans - There will be an increase in home-based wrap-around services in all 92 counties to strengthen the ability of a family to safely care for a child. This could increase federal funding, particularly under Title IV-E. FSSA will work to reduce out of home placements; protect children while maintaining them safely in their own home setting; and preserve families.

Changes (cont.):

- Case Dismissals - FSSA now requires staff to provide a rationale to the court in every case where they request a motion to dismiss. This new policy was effective September 1.
- New Technology - FSSA will require Unisys, the contractor running the child welfare information system, to develop 1) the technology for use with hand-held devices that can interface with the child welfare database, giving access to data and saving time, 2) the technology for caseworkers to phone in dictated notes to a secure system where they will be entered in the child welfare database.

New Partnerships:

- Higher Education - The state of Indiana will encourage institutions of higher education including Community College of Indiana to work with the state to create by the Spring 2005 semester certificate programs with credits that count toward a baccalaureate degree.
- Family Court - Governor Kernan has sent a letter to the Chief Justice supporting the Court's efforts to expand the Indiana Supreme Court Family Court Project.

"Ultimately, this is about our children and what we can do to best ensure their safety and health."

*—Governor Joseph E. Kernan
September 28, 2004*

- State Police - FSSA is working with state police to draft an MOU that will give secure, limited access to criminal records to make background checks quick and accurate so judges can have full information before placing a child.
- State Fatality Review Team - Governor Kernan has appointed this group of experts from around the state to review child fatalities in order to detect patterns, suggest topics for needed public outreach or recommend changes in procedures.

Local prevention strategies and Kids First Trust Fund

Local prevention strategies are crucial because they address issues and help provide solutions that are important in each community. Indiana funds:

- \$2.2 million for the Kids First Trust Fund from the sale of Kids First license plates
- \$41 million dollars for Healthy Families Indiana to reduce child abuse and neglect

The role of Child Protective Services

Child Protective Services (CPS) protects Indiana's children from further abuse or neglect and prevents, remedies, or assists in solving problems that may result in abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

The child's safety is the primary factor in all CPS investigations. CPS exists to keep children safe from abusers. Unfortunately, even when case managers do their jobs to the best of their ability, some adults still abuse children.

Case managers are often called into dangerous situations, forced to make immediate emergency decisions about the health and safety of children.

There are 800 family case managers statewide to investigate more than 60,000 calls a year. In 2003, Governor Kernan added 40 new front-line case managers. When a child's health and safety is in danger, case managers may remove the child from an abusive or neglectful home. Children are then placed into a safe home with an appropriate relative or emergency foster parent. This is the only time a case manager may make decisions about a child's placement unilaterally.

Within 48 hours of an emergency removal, the family's case is taken before a county judge, who decides whether to make the child a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) (removing the child from the abusive home on a more permanent basis) or return the child to the parents.

The budget to protect children in Indiana was \$627 million federal, state and local funds in State Fiscal Year 2003.

Healthy Families

Healthy Families Indiana is a voluntary home visitation program designed to reduce child abuse and neglect, childhood health problems and later juvenile delinquency by reaching at-risk children.

Healthy Families works:

- 98 percent of families enrolled in Healthy Families have no substantiated abuse or neglect in the following year
- Indiana was named one of only two "Centers of Excellence" in the nation by Prevent Child Abuse/Healthy Families America
- number of home visits reached 1 million in 2003

Participants are mostly low-income, single mothers under age 20 who enter the program either before or right after the birth of a child.

Child Protection Task Force

Governor Kernan's State Child Protection Task Force goes a step further by utilizing a hands-on group of individuals across the state with specific expertise in all areas of child protection and care.

This task force created by Governor Kernan works directly with Child Protective Services staff in complex cases to advise or recommend placement in the home with appropriate support, or recommend that the child's needs require placement elsewhere.

The result is more consistent and appropriate placements throughout the state to better address the needs of children raised in different environments — ranging from maintaining a proper support network, to education and medical care.

Child Welfare Information

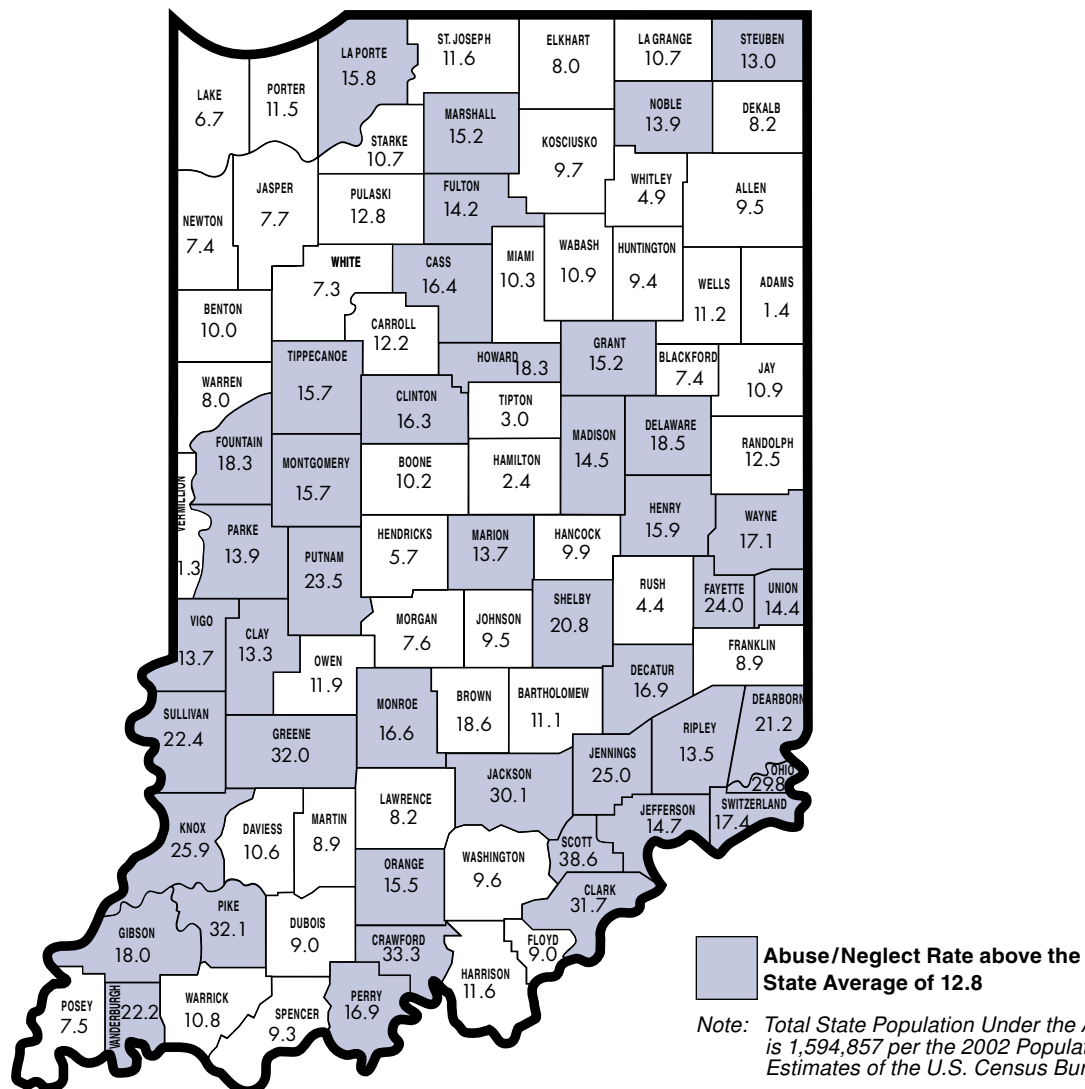
Reports of child abuse and neglect are confidential in Indiana under IC 31-33-18, except when a child's death is caused by abuse or neglect.

The Indiana General Assembly creates the laws governing confidentiality of reports. In March 2004, Governor Kernan signed HB1194, which opens portions of abuse and neglect death reports to the public.

Beginning July 1, 2004, those reports may be disclosed by county judges.

Number Of Abused And Neglected Children Per 1,000 Population Under The Age Of 18

Substantiated Cases For State Fiscal Year 2003



What *You* Can Do

Report child abuse or neglect
Call 1-800-800-5556

Be a mentor to a child

Participate in Healthy Families Indiana
www.IN.gov/fssa/families/protection/dfchealthy.html

Adopt a child or become a foster parent
Call 1-800-468-4228

**Get involved in children's services at your local level;
contact your county's Step Ahead Coordinator to find out how.**
www.IN.gov/fssa/children/stepahead/index.html

To Report Child Abuse or Neglect Call Toll-Free

1-800-800-5556

Indiana law requires anyone who observes child abuse or neglect to report the situation.



State of Indiana

Family and Social Services Administration
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Cheryl G. Sullivan Secretary
www.IN.gov/fssa

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sex, age, disability, national origin, or ancestry.